

The Cheerful Letter

EVERY PLACE A CHURCH; EVERY DAY THE LORD'S DAY; ALL EVENTS BLESSINGS; ALL JOY
THANKSGIVING; AND ALL NATURE AND LIFE FULL OF GOD.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

VOL. XXVII.

OCTOBER, 1918

No. 5

THE CHEERFUL LETTER.

MONTHLY, EXCEPT AUGUST: 50 cents a year.

Single copy, 5 cents.

Entered at the Boston, Mass., post-office as second class
mail matter, Nov. 14, 1892.

CONTENTS OF NO. 5.

"I AM THE WAY"	45
CONSOLATION	45
THE STILL HOUR	47
THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB	47
THE MOTHERS' COUNCIL:— SCHOOLROOM ETHICS	48
NATURAL HISTORY:— THE BLUEBIRDS' CALL FOR HELP	49
THE ACHIEVEMENT OF DOGS	49
CHILDREN'S CLASSICS:— THE KING OF THE GOLDEN RIVER	50
LETTERS FROM A SOLDIER IN FRANCE	53
THE AMUSEMENT COLUMN	55
THE CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE	56
IMPORTANT NOTICES	56

"I AM THE WAY."

Art Thou the way, Lord? Yet the way is steep!

And hedged with cruel thorns and set with briars;

We stumble onward, or we pause to weep,
And still the hard road baffles our desires,
And still the hot noon beats, the hours delay,

The end is out of sight,—Art Thou the way?

Art Thou the way, Lord? Yet the way is blind!

We grope and guess, perplexed with mists and suns;

We only see the guide-posts left behind,
Invisible to us the forward ones;
The chart is hard to read, we wind and stray,
Beset with hovering doubts,—Art Thou the way?

Art Thou the way, Lord? Yet the way is long!

Year follows year while we are journeying still,

The limbs are feeble grown which once were strong,
Dimmed are the eyes and quenched the ardent will,

The world is veiled with shadows sad and gray;

Yet we must travel on,—Art Thou the way?

Art Thou the way, Lord? Then the way is sweet,

No matter if it puzzle or distress,
Though winds may scourge, or blinding suns may beat.

The perfect rest shall round our weariness,

Cool dews shall heal the fevered pulse of day;

We shall find home at last through Thee, the way.

—*Susan Coolidge.*

CONSOLATION.

To touch a fresh wound requires a skilled and delicate hand. Often in trying to heal or bind up, we may inflict exquisite pain. Each sorrow is individual, unlike any other. It has to do with the secrets of being. It is bound up with thousands of hidden strings that cross and recross and inter-knit, and each one is a nerve of pain or a thrill of memory.

But the attempt to console or to speak peace cannot be foregone. The effort is essential to prove that we are human, even if it be manifested in but a single tear or hand-pressure. We, too, have suffered, throbbed, ached with our kind in the great tragedy of nature which, first written on bleeding hearts, is translated on scarred faces and bowed forms, in halting steps and hanging hands. We, too, are bound up in the great bundle of sorrow, pain, and loss, and can only make our sign to the fresh mourner that we know and understand; and if we have little or no balm to offer, we are still in the same boat, on the same stormy seas, and have suffered like shipwreck.

Our view of death alters, like all other views. In youth it is far off, a mystic possibility; in age it comes nearer, but still is not realized. At moments it is dreaded, at other moments is an indifferent fact, at others still is even prayed for. At times it scarcely seems a mystery, so thin the

cloud has grown upon the horizon. We seem to see into it and through it, and to discover that it is only a large extension of sleep,—the simple fact that we do not wake up in this world, but in another. Then in this mood of assertive hope, this almost certainty, we seem to know why our attempts at consolation look so poor and ineffective. All the time we are trying to console, a voice is speaking in us, saying there is little or nothing to grieve over, that we should involuntarily smile if we knew how well it is with those who seem to have ceased to exist and yet in spite of appearances have entered into a fulness of life of which we have no conception.

This strange mood runs alongside the black line of death and oblivion, like the silvery current in the Rhone beside its dark blue waters that will not blend or mingle. We see both sides of this strange thing we call death; and, while our eyes are full of tears and pity, something is always whispering that it is well—more than well—with the dead. We look into their calm, still faces, where the traces of the earth struggle, the long agony, perhaps, has been smoothed away by invisible fingers; and a peace, a quietude, a hush, steals in we cannot define.

Before that marble rest, how poor are our little attempts to speak! The great fact is there, but it is not frightful; it is sublime. Nature has taken the face so pain-marred and disease-formed and made it a thing of mystic beauty. So the thought of escape is always with us before the dead. They have got away; they have left the body's chrysalis without a tenant. The door was left open, and they glided out and got away. It is only when we begin to speculate that we begin to doubt. Before the presence there is something tremendously triumphant, a scene of victory, of having won the fight. The evil of this world has done its worst, but it could not conquer. How joyful seems the sense of getting away from all that cumbered and hindered! We sometimes share that joy openly. We say how glad we are that they did not linger long, that the struggle was soon over.

The healing that comes after the loss inflicted by death is no less significant. It comes not from any process of thought, but it floods in like the spring. We go to bed some night sad and unreconciled; we awake in the morning and find the world altered. There have been gentle touches, soft ministrations, the secret dropping of balm, the consciousness that it is well—so

well—with those who have left us. Their fulness of life and new experience impinge upon ours. We can rejoice with them again; and, strange to say, we need not suffer for or with them. They stand above suffering now. It is good to know that they have passed through to the other side, that they need not do it over again. The means of happiness must be so much greater there where they are! Their education and development must go on under such beautiful conditions. How the lives must expand! How the blighted must rear their heads again and begin to grow!

So the great wave of comfort comes and helps us to bear the sense of loss. It beautifies and dignifies existence. We have interests in two worlds. The cloud is no longer black, but silver-gray. We open our souls to the subtle healing power of nature. The tenderness of those who are left to us is intensified by the new secret we seem to hold from God. We cannot impart it. It is too good for others to believe. It is an institution. When doubt breathes on it we are pained as by a profanation of things holy. Readily would we impart our faith if we could, would let the world know that we have not let go our hold on our dear ones, that they are still ours. But how put it into words? The attempt would be a failure. No, we think much, but say little.

This tender consoling conviction has made the race believe sturdily in immortality. Philosophers have tried to discover the origin of the faith; but, if we read our own hearts, perhaps we shall learn how it arose in primitive man, above all in the primitive mother of the race.

The dead are restored, made to live in the secret places of the heart. They take on a new order of existence in our homes, though seldom spoken of, still always present. We do not let them go, we enshrine them. Do they think of us? Do we not feel them? Have we not an instinct of their presence? So distinctions and dividing lines melt spheres, run together, and blend. The universal becomes permeable to thought. Love is a vital essence. We are made citizens of all worlds. There is the great unity of endless life, and God present everywhere.—*Christian Register*.

One great and kindling thought from a retired and obscure man may live when thrones are fallen, and the memory of those who filled them obliterated, and, like an undying fire, may illuminate and quicken all future generations.—*Channing*.

THE STILL HOUR.

Nearer, my God, to thee,
Nearer to thee!
E'en though it be a cross
That raiseth me:
Still all my song would be,
Nearer, my God, to thee,—
Nearer to thee!

Though, like a wanderer,
The sun gone down,
Darkness be over me,
My rest a stone;
Yet in my dreams I'd be
Nearer, my God, to thee,—
Nearer to thee!

There let the way appear,
Steps unto heaven;
All that thou sendest me
In mercy given;
Angels to beckon me
Nearer, my God, to thee,—
Nearer to thee!

Then with my waking thoughts
Bright with thy praise,
Out of my stony griefs
Bethel I'll raise:
So by my woes to be
Nearer, my God, to thee,—
Nearer to thee!

Or if on joyful wing,
Cleaving the sky,
Sun, moon, and stars forgot,
Upward I fly;
Still all my song shall be,
Nearer, my God, to thee,—
Nearer to thee!

—Sarah F. Adams.

Nothing fails in this world, not even the feeblest finger-stir of endeavor.—P. C. M.

THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB.

Send all offers and requests for this department to Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 25 Fairmount Way, Quincy, Mass. Tel. Quincy 1140.

Please remember, when you see a request for a book in the Book Club, to write a card to Mrs. Nichols, asking "Shall I send such a book to such a person?" before sending it, else the person who requests it may receive several copies. When any one writes directly to you, asking for a book offered by you, send a card to Mrs. Nichols, saying that you have sent it. When you receive more requests than you can meet, send these to the Book Club to be printed here.

OFFERS.

The Brighton Branch offers the following. Address Miss C. L. Murdock, 320 Allston Street, Boulevard Station, Boston, Mass. "The Shuttle," Frances Hodgson Burnett; "The Princess Passes," G. N.

and A. M. Williamson; "The Blazed Trail," Stewart Edward White; "With the Immortals," F. Marion Crawford; "He that Will Not when He May," Mrs. Oliphant; "Betty Leicester," Sarah Orne Jewett; "The Choir Invisible," James Lane Allen; "Rhoda Thornton's Girlhood," Mary E. Pratt; "A Study in Scarlet and Other Stories," Conan Doyle; "Memoirs of a Physician," Alexandre Dumas; "The Black Tulip," Alexandre Dumas; "Tales of the White Hills," Nathaniel Hawthorne; "Mince Pie Island," R. St. John Corbet; Milton's "L'Allegro," "Il Penseroso," "Comus," and "Lycidas"; Coleridge's "Ancient Mariner"; Lowell's "Vision of Sir Launfal"; "A Day with the Poet Keats"; "The Story without an End," C. A. Alcott; "Seeing England with Uncle John," Anne Warner.

SCHOOL BOOKS.—"Lessons in English," Sara E. H. Lockwood; Swinton's "Second Reader"; Swinton's "Third Reader"; "The Franklin Fourth Reader," G. S. Hilliard; Patterson's "Elements of Grammar and Composition"; "How to Talk," W. B. Powell; "How to Speak and Write Correctly," Mrs. N. L. Knox; "Paragraph-Writing," F. N. Scott and J. V. Denney; "Composition-Rhetoric," F. N. Scott and J. V. Denney; Harrington's "Spelling-Book"; Worcester's "New Primary Spelling-Book"; Worcester's "New Pronouncing Spelling-Book"; "The Great English Writers," T. J. Backus and H. D. Brown; Colburn's "Intellectual Arithmetic"; "The Franklin Elementary Arithmetic"; "The Theory of Music," L. C. Elson; "The Realm of Music," L. C. Elson; "New England Conservatory Course in Sight-Singing" (Solfeccio), S. W. Cole (2 vols.); "Common Sense French," H. Pooley and K. Carnie; "Elementary French Grammar," J. G. Keetels; Chardenal's "First French Course"; "First Lessons in Learning French," Gustave Chouquet; "La Première Année de Grammaire," Larive et Fleury; "Le Livre des Petits Enfants"; Molière's "Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme"; Corneille's "Le Cid"; Labiche et Martin's "La Poudre aux Yeux"; Labiche et Martin's "Le Voyage de Monsieur Perrichon."

REQUESTS.

1. I am a girl near sixteen and should like to receive reading matter. I live in the country and should like to correspond with some of the girls of my age. Address Miss Audrey E. Whitlock, Floyd, Virginia, Route 4, Box 24.

2. Mrs. Ella Hay, Locust Grove, Oklahoma, asks for "Josephus" and *The Ladies' Home Journal*, 1915, or succeeding years.

3. I am seventy-eight years old. My grandfather fought under George Washington in the Revolution; I served in the Civil War; and I have some boys registered for the present great war. I should like to get the history of the great world war. I should also like to get a Cruden's "Concordance of the Bible" and a History of the Bible.

We're fighting for "Liberty,"

We're going to win;

We'll fight till "Old Glory"

Shall wave in Berlin.

Joseph Capps, Hendersonville, North Carolina, Route 1.

4. I wish the friend who is sending me *The Designer* would send me *The Delineator* instead. I do not know who is sending it, so this is the only way I can reach them. Then, I so much want "Ben Hur" and Marie Corelli's "The Life Everlasting." I severely injured my ankle last week and am confined to my chair most of the time since. Address Mrs. Cora A. Hoskinson, Three Rivers, Michigan.

5. I most heartily thank all who have sent me picture magazines, etc., for my Sunday-school class of little girls. It has been impossible for me to write each one separately, owing to the serious sickness of my father, who is still in the hospital. This is a very busy season for my husband and myself, for we have been having Protracted Meetings in all our churches (four) on his circuit. I should be very glad to receive good magazines for myself and parishioners, who are mostly cotton-mill people. I prefer *Mother's Magazine*, *Pictorial*, *Home Journal*, etc., as I have many calls for these. We have a good live Methodist Sunday-school in this village. My children are all eager for the literature sent. My Sunday-school class are very faithful and earnest workers. They have recently made \$18 for church work and are going out in the country soon to pick cotton and give the proceeds to the church. Mrs. M. B. Strickland, Swepsonville, North Carolina.

6. I thank you all for the things you have sent me. I should like some books or other reading. Grandmother and I have moved. Our address is Stuart, Virginia, R. F. D. 5. Lester Hall.

THE MOTHERS' COUNCIL.

SCHOOLROOM ETHICS.

(Continued from last number.)

Here is a second contribution to the subject in our last number:—

Elsie and Minnie, two little girls, aged ten and nine and a half years, were placed in a class by themselves, as they happened to be the only two children of about the same age in the school.

Elsie was a sunny-hearted child—her face always reminded me of a brook with the sun shining in it. Minnie, on the contrary, had a sly, secretive expression. She was a mischievous child, and her greatest delight was to get Elsie scolded for things she knew were her own fault.

Elsie could not resist the temptation to laugh when Minnie played monkey tricks on purpose to get her innocent companion blamed.

The teacher was completely deceived and misled by the naughty child. I have heard her again and again speak very sharply to Elsie when she laughed, and she immediately followed it by saying in a gentle affectionate manner, "Come, Minnie, dear, study your lessons." Of course, everybody else but the teacher knew quite well that Minnie was the cause of Elsie's laughing. One day, however, Minnie was caught in doing something naughty. The teacher then kept Elsie after school and gave her a serious reproof. She said: "Now, Elsie, this will not do. You are spoiling Minnie. She would be perfectly good if it were not for you." Poor Elsie tried to say something or other to justify herself from this charge. The teacher answered her very sharply, saying: "That is not so. Minnie wishes to please me."

I could have enlightened her in one word but was withheld by the law forbidding a scholar to reveal the fault of another to the teacher.

The fact was, the very first day Minnie came to the school she strutted up to me with an impudent expression which mischievous children often have, and said "What will you bet that I cannot make you snigger right out in your French lesson?" I was four years older than she but I must say I was much disgusted with her impertinence, and ought, of course, to have told the teacher what kind of child she was; but the teacher, though a conscientious person, was very wilful, and I doubt whether it would have done any good.—*Sister Constance.*

NATURAL HISTORY.

THE BLUEBIRDS' CALL FOR HELP.

I found, one day, when passing through an orchard, a young bluebird lying at the foot of a tree. It had fallen evidently from its nest and lay helpless with one of its legs badly injured. I picked up the baby thing and tenderly carried it to the cottage, where I made a nest of grass for it in one of my rubbers, and placed it at the end of the porch.

I soon found that the parent birds had kept a close watch of their baby. They were very shy of me at first, and hesitated to feed their little one when I was near. Gradually, however, they grew less afraid, and sang their soft notes and busily flew back and forth bringing food to their loved one.

Both mother and father bird insisted that the little bird should not stay in the rubber on the porch. Every morning before I came out, they had coaxed it out of its nest into the long grass below. At evening, thinking it needed warmth, and that the parents would have to leave it for the other nestlings, I put it back in the rubber and covered it over with a stocking.

One afternoon I was sitting on the steps when suddenly the old birds became greatly excited. They flew from the end of the porch in circles toward me, closer and closer, till I feared they would strike my face. I first thought they were trying to drive me away, and then it occurred to me that some danger to their little one was lurking in the grass. I rose quickly, went around the porch, and was just in time to see a snake in the act of seizing the young bird, who lay with wings outspread and panting with fright. My presence instantly scared the snake away and the old birds were straightway greatly relieved. Somehow ever since that time I cannot help feeling a little proud that the birds sought my aid and that I understood their call for help. What a pity had I not responded.—*By M. Pamela Clough.*

THE ACHIEVEMENT OF DOGS.

Many and marvellous have been the achievements which history has recorded to the credit of faithful, sagacious, and courageous dogs of the past.

History chronicles that the wonderful dog Xanthippus heroically swam for miles by the side of his master's galley to Sala-

mis when the Athenians were forced to abandon their city, and the body of that devoted and courageous canine hero was buried by his grateful master on the crest of a beautiful promontory, which to this day bears the name of "The Dog's Grave."

In ancient history it is recorded that the city of Corinth was saved from enemies, who had planned to capture it, by fifty faithful war-dogs who attacked the invading foe that had landed under the cover of darkness while the garrison slept, and fought the invaders with unbounded courage until every dog but one of the fifty valiant canine warriors had been killed. That one surviving dog succeeded in rousing the garrison from their slumber in time to save the city.

Among the many pathetic incidents in the lives of famous dogs of history may be mentioned the touching incident in the life of the devoted dog Hyrcanian, who, on beholding the dead body of his beloved master burning on a funeral pile, leaped into the flames and was consumed with it.

It is quite natural that the Switzers should venerate the memory of the Great St. Bernard "Barry," over whose grave at Berne, Switzerland, a stately monument has been reared.

There is a large and beautifully kept cemetery for dogs near Asnieres, on the outskirts of Paris, France. When Consul-General Gowdy was lately conducting a party of friends through this canine cemetery, pointing to the tomb of the Great St. Bernard who had saved the lives of forty human beings, he asked, "What man can boast of having done so much?"

Can we wonder that Ketmir, that faithful, patient, tireless canine sentinel and guardian of the "Seven Sleepers of Ephesus," was welcomed into Paradise by Mahomet?

The desperate combat, to the death, between the devoted dog of Aubry and his master's murderer was a notable event in the annals of history. In that deadly conflict Aubry's valiant dog proved himself the matchless hero of the hour. That dog's heroic act in his master's defence has never been excelled by any human soldier on the battlefield of war.

THE DOG'S LIFE OF DEVOTION.

It is a deep mystery, this animal world in which we live and of which we are an integral part.

Since the dawn of history the dog has distinguished himself for notable deeds of courage, devotion, fidelity, and affection.

No other animal on earth is so fond of man and so loyal to him. The dog's life is given up to the service of his master, whom he looks up to and worships as if he regarded him a deity. The dog has a religion in which his human master is his god. The only heaven a dog knows is a welcome place in the heart of him whom he delights to serve. With that possession his happiness is complete.

Human friends may prove deceitful, false, and treacherous, but the dog's friendship is unfailing and enduring. It is proof against all temptations. If every other friend in the world turns traitor to a man, his dog will stand by him and refuse to "turn him down." When dire misfortune overtakes the master, his dog is the one true friend who does not desert him in his extremity, but clings the closer to him. And at the end, that last sad scene that comes to all—friends, home, and family gone—the loving and devoted companion of poverty, want, and rags, the ever-faithful and loving dog, follows his master's lifeless body to an unmarked grave, and there, prone upon a cold, damp mound of clay, he lays his head between his paws and mourns a requiem until he dies of grief.

The dog's sincere love, unswerving devotion, and rare fidelity have shone in song and story since the dawn of civilization. There can be no reasonable doubt that we share a common nature and a common fate with our mute fellow-creatures around us, which we are pleased to call "lower animals," and it may be that our poor dumb relations share a common destiny with us.

The Rev. Henry Ward Beecher, who for nearly half a century represented the heart and brains of the Christian clergy of America, in the course of an eloquent sermon on "Men and Other Animals," declared: "Why, if horses and dogs have not souls to be saved, what in Heaven's name will become of their masters? For fidelity and devotion, for love and loyalty, many a two-legged animal is far below the dog and the horse. Happy would it be for thousands of people if they could stand at last before the Judgment seat of Christ and truthfully say, 'I have loved as truly, I have lived as decently as my dog.' And yet we speak of the dog as being 'only a brute.'"

EULOGY OF A FAMOUS DOG.

Poets of all ages have sung the praises of dogs, and one of the noblest and truest tributes ever paid to canine worth is expressed in the lines of Lord Byron which,

with the epitaph inscribed to his dog Boatswain, run as follows:

"When some proud son of man returns to earth,
Unknown to glory but upheld by birth,
The sculptor's art exhausts the pomp of woe,
And storied urns record who rest below
When all is done, upon the tomb is seen
Not what he was, but what he should have been:
But the poor dog, in life the firmest friend,
The first to welcome, foremost to defend
Whose honest heart is still his master's own,
Who labors, fights, lives, breathes for him alone,
Unhonored falls, unnoticed all his worth,
Denied in heaven the soul he held on earth;
While man, vain insect! hopes to be forgiven,
And claims himself a sole exclusive heaven.
Ye, who perchance behold this simple urn
Pass on—it honors none you wish to mourn:
To mark a Friend's remains these stones arise;
I never knew but one—and here he lies."

"Near this spot,
Are deposited the remains of one
Who possessed Beauty without Vanity,
Strength without Insolence,
Courage without Ferocity,
And all the Virtues of man without his Vices.
This Praise which would be unmeaning Flattery
If inscribed over human ashes,
Is but a just tribute to the Memory of
BOATSWAIN, A DOG."

—J. W. Hodge, M.D.

CHILDREN'S CLASSICS.

THE KING OF THE GOLDEN RIVER.

(Continued from last number.)

This was certainly an abrupt and unconnected mode of commencing conversation. It might indeed be supposed to refer to the course of Gluck's thoughts, which had first produced the dwarf's observations out of the pot; but whatever it referred to, Gluck had no inclination to dispute the dictum.

"Wouldn't it, sir?" said Gluck, very mildly, and submissively indeed.

"No," said the dwarf, conclusively, "not it wouldn't." And with that the dwarf pulled his cap hard over his brows, and took two turns of three feet long up and

down the room, lifting his legs up very high, and setting them down very hard. This pause gave Gluck time to collect his thoughts a little, and seeing no great reason to view his diminutive visitor with dread, and feeling his curiosity overcome his amazement, he ventured on a question of peculiar delicacy.

"Pray, sir," said Gluck, rather hesitatingly, "were you my mug?"

On which the little man turned sharp round, walked straight up to Gluck, and drew himself up to his full height. "I," said the little man, "am the King of the Golden River." Whereupon he turned about again and took two more turns, some six feet long, in order to allow time for the consternation which his announcement produced in his auditor to evaporate. After which, he again walked up to Gluck and stood still, as if expecting some comment on his communication.

Gluck determined to say something at all events. "I hope your Majesty is very well," said Gluck.

"Listen," said the little man, deigning no reply to this polite inquiry. "I am King of what you mortals call the Golden River. The shape you saw me in was owing to the malice of a stronger king, from whose enchantments you have this instant freed me. What I have seen of you, and your conduct to your wicked brothers, renders me willing to serve you; therefore, attend to what I tell you. Whoever shall climb to the top of that mountain from which you see the Golden River issue, and shall cast into the stream at its source three drops of holy water, for him, and for him only, the river shall turn to gold. But no one failing in his first can succeed in a second attempt; and if any one shall cast unholy water into the river, it will overwhelm him, and he will become a black stone." So saying, the King of the Golden River turned away deliberately and walked into the centre of the hottest flame of the furnace. His figure became red, white, transparent, dazzling—a blaze of intense light—rose, trembled, and disappeared. The King of the Golden River had evaporated.

"Oh!" cried poor Gluck, running to look up the chimney after him. "Oh, dear, dear, dear me! My mug! my mug! my mug!"—

The King of the Golden River had hardly made his extraordinary exit before Hans and Schwartz came roaring into the house, very savagely drunk. The discovery of the total loss of their last piece of plate

had the effect of sobering them just enough to enable them to stand over Gluck, beating him very steadily for a quarter of an hour; at the expiration of which period they dropped into a couple of chairs and requested to know what he had got to say for himself. Gluck told them his story, of which, of course, they did not believe a word. They beat him again, till their arms were tired, and staggered to bed. In the morning, however, the steadiness with which he adhered to his story obtained him some degree of credence; the immediate consequence of which was that the two brothers, after wrangling a long time on the knotty question, which of them should try his fortune first, drew their swords and began fighting. The noise of the fray alarmed the neighbors, who, finding they could not pacify the combatants, sent for the constable.

Hans on hearing this contrived to escape, and hid himself; but Schwartz was taken before the magistrate, fined for breaking the peace, and, having drunk out his last penny the evening before, was thrown into prison till he should pay.

When Hans heard this, he was much delighted, and determined to set out immediately for the Golden River. How to get the holy water was the question. He went to the priest, but the priest could not give any holy water to so abandoned a character. So Hans went to vespers in the evening for the first time in his life and, under pretence of crossing himself, stole a cupful and returned home in triumph.

Next morning he got up before the sun rose, put the holy water into a flask, and two bottles of wine and some meat in a basket, slung them over his back, took his alpine staff in his hands, and set off for the mountains.

On his way out of the town he had to pass the prison, and as he looked in at the windows, whom should he see but Schwartz himself peeping out of the bars and looking very disconsolate.

"Good-morning, brother," said Hans; "have you any message for the King of the Golden River?"

Schwartz gnashed his teeth with rage and shook the bars with all his strength, but Hans only laughed at him and, advising him to make himself comfortable till he came back again, marched off in the highest spirits in the world.

It was indeed a morning that might have made any one happy, even with no Golden River to seek for. Level lines of dewy

mist lay stretched along the valley, out of which rose the massive mountains, their lower cliffs in pale gray shadow, hardly distinguishable from the floating vapor, but gradually ascending till they caught the sunlight, which ran in sharp touches of ruddy color along the angular crags, and pierced, in long level rays, through their fringes of spearlike pine. Far above shot up red, splintered masses of castellated rock, jagged, and shivered into myriads of fantastic forms, with here and there a streak of sunlit snow traced down their chasms like a line of forked lightning; and far beyond and above all these, fainter than the morning cloud but purer and changeless, slept, in the blue sky, the utmost peaks of the eternal snow.

The Golden River, which sprang from one of the lower and snowless elevations, was now nearly in shadow—all but the uppermost jets of spray, which rose like slow smoke above the undulating line of the cataract and floated away in feeble wreaths upon the morning wind.

On this object, and on this alone, Hans' eyes and thoughts were fixed. Forgetting the distance he had to traverse, he set off at an imprudent rate of walking, which greatly exhausted him before he had scaled the first range of green and low hills. He was, moreover, surprised, on surmounting them, to find that a large glacier, of whose existence, notwithstanding his previous knowledge of the mountains, he had been absolutely ignorant, lay between him and the source of the Golden River. He entered on it with the boldness of a practised mountaineer, yet he thought he had never traversed so strange or so dangerous a glacier in his life. The ice was excessively slippery, and out of all its chasms came wild sounds of gushing water—not monotonous or low, but changeful and loud, rising occasionally into drifting passages of wild melody, then breaking off into short, melancholy tones or sudden shrieks resembling those of human voices in distress or pain. The ice was broken into thousands of confused shapes, but none, Hans thought, like the ordinary forms of splintered ice. There seemed a curious *expression* about all their outlines—a perpetual resemblance to living features, distorted and scornful. Myriads of deceitful shadows and lurid lights played and floated about and through the pale blue pinnacles, dazzling and confusing the sight of the traveller, while his ears grew dull and his

head giddy with the constant gush and roar of the concealed waters. These painful circumstances increased upon him as he advanced; the ice crashed and yawned into fresh chasms at his feet; tottering spires nodded around him and fell thundering across his path; and, though he had repeatedly faced these dangers on the most terrific glaciers and in the wildest weather, it was with a new and oppressive feeling of panic terror that he leaped the last chasm and flung himself, exhausted and shuddering, on the firm turf of the mountain.

He had been compelled to abandon his basket of food, which became a perilous encumbrance on the glacier, and had now no means of refreshing himself but by breaking off and eating some of the pieces of ice. This, however, relieved his thirst; an hour's repose recruited his hardy frame, and with the indomitable spirit of avarice he resumed his laborious journey.

His way now lay straight up a ridge of bare red rocks, without a blade of grass to ease the foot or a projecting angle to afford an inch of shade from the south sun. It was past noon, and the rays beat intensely upon the steep path, while the whole atmosphere was motionless and penetrated with heat. Intense thirst was soon added to the bodily fatigue with which Hans was now afflicted; glance after glance he cast on the flask of water which hung at his belt. "Three drops are enough," at last thought he; "I may at least cool my lips with it."

He opened the flask and was raising it to his lips, when his eyes fell on an object lying on the rock beside him; he thought it moved. It was a small dog, apparently in the last agony of death from thirst. Its tongue was out, its jaws dry, its limbs extended lifelessly, and a swarm of black ants were crawling about its lips and throat. Its eye moved to the bottle which Hans held in his hand. He raised it, drank, and spurned the animal with his foot, and passed on. And he did not know how it was, but he thought that a strange shadow had suddenly come across the blue sky.

The path became steeper and more rugged every moment, and the high hill air, instead of refreshing him, seemed to throw his blood into a fever. The noise of the hills and cataracts sounded like mockery in his ears; they were all distant, and his thirst increased every moment. Another hour passed, and he again looked down to the flask at his side; it was half empty, but there was much more than three drops in it. He stopped to open it, and again, a

he did so, something moved in the path above him. It was a fair child, stretched nearly lifeless on the rock, its breast heaving with thirst, its eyes closed, and its lips parching and burning. Hans eyed it deliberately, drank, and passed on. And a dark gray cloud came over the sun, and long snake-like shadows crept up along the mountain sides. Hans struggled on. The sun was sinking, but its descent seemed to bring no coolness; the leaden weight of the dead air pressed upon his brow and heart, but the goal was near. He saw the catastrophe of the Golden River springing from the hillside scarcely five hundred feet above him. He paused for a moment to breathe, and sprang on to complete his task.

At this moment a faint cry fell on his ear. He turned, and saw a gray-haired old man extended on the rocks. His eyes were sunk, and his features deadly pale and gathered into an expression of despair. "Water!" He stretched his arms to Hans and cried feebly: "Water! I am dying."

"I have none," replied Hans. "Thou hast had thy share of life." He strode over the prostrate body and darted on. And a flash of blue lightning rose out of the east, shaped like a sword; it shook thrice over the whole heaven and left it dark with one heavy, impenetrable shade. The sun was setting; it plunged toward the horizon like a red-hot ball.

The roar of the Golden River rose on Hans' ear. He stood at the brink of the chasm through which it ran. Its waves were filled with the glory of the sunset; they shook their crests like tongues of fire, and flashes of bloody light gleamed along their foam. Their sound came mightier and mightier on his senses; his brain grew giddy with the prolonged thunder. Shuddering, he drew the flask from his girdle and hurled it into the centre of the torrent. As he did so, an icy chill shot through his limbs; he staggered, shrieked, and fell. The waters closed over his cry, and the moaning of the river rose wildly into the night as it gushed over

THE BLACK STONE.

— John Ruskin.

(To be continued.)

LETTERS FROM A SOLDIER IN FRANCE.

(Continued from last number.)

The birds have been singing beautifully to-day, and I must take back my remarks I have made against them. The cuckoo's call is always interesting. I hope to hear

the nightingale to-night. It kept one man awake the other night.

May 16. On *camion* again. . . . On Saturday afternoon we sold from our truck 3,000 francs' worth of goods, and, best of all, took in 7,000 francs from the boys to send to their families at home.

May 19. Sunday. Life is a continuous merry-go-round. There are so many calls that I never know where I shall be from one day to another.

Last Saturday, May 11, I was rumbling around in the springless *camion* selling "Y" goods to the men near the front. In one afternoon and evening, I sold 3,000 francs' worth of stuff to endless lines of men, and, best of all, took in 7,000 francs to be sent to the folks at home. I also distributed piles and piles of paper and envelopes for Mothers' Day.

The morning I spent listing the sums to be sent home, mending torn bills, and preparing for another trip in the big truck. — had taken the smaller truck with the piano for the church services. By the way, there were between sixty and seventy at the early communion service. I had a very prosperous day and returned just in time to catch the four o'clock train.

Monday about noon I met —, who asked me to go to Aix to see how things were there. There have been practically no leave men there for the past month, but we have kept the place running, in the hope of having men in the near future. . . .

Queen Victoria, by the way, chose for a summer castle a hill looking down on Lake Bourget, in the village of Tresserves, a suburb of Aix. She had bought some of the land and had negotiated for the rest of the hill. In the land she wanted, however, there was a roadway, and the town fathers made such a fuss about letting her have the road, asking 2,000 francs for the privilege, that Queen Victoria gave it up in disgust. Thus Tresserves forfeited the glory of having the Queen of England as a resident, for a paltry 2,000 francs. Aix has never forgiven Tresserves.

Thursday was a glorious day, and — invited me to go with him on his visit to —, who lives in the castle of Perigren, about thirty miles from Aix. To get there we had to skirt the southern end of the lake, then wind up the mountain-side to the famous Col du Chat, used, it is said, by Napoleon on his way into Italy. I can never express adequately my admiration of the marvellous scenery as we followed the sinuous road to the summit of the pass. Each turn made the color of the lake more

gorgeous and the outlook upon the snow caps of Dauphine more inspiring.

We descended into a beautiful valley from the Col du Chat, and when — told me that the winding blue river below was the Rhone, I had the feeling that I was approaching an old friend. And I was not disappointed in my old friend as it skirted here the foothills of the Jura mountains in this picturesque valley.

The Ducs de Savoie had well chosen their place of residence in this spot, and the castle of Périguen was in every way fitting to their ducal state. It is situated on a beautiful hill, with the houses of a little village clustered close together at its foot.

— have not only kept this castle in beautiful order, but are keeping up the spirit of the place. To the people of the village they are not mere rich Americans who have taken the castle, but real traditional *châtelains* who have the welfare of the little town at heart as ever any old duke could have. Marvellous stories of the benevolence of the — are heard on all sides.

— received us warmly, indicated a path which we could follow through the park, and told us to be back for tea in twenty minutes. When we got back, we found the tea ready for us, with the most luscious tarts you ever saw, of real live strawberries!

I have forgotten to tell you about the visit of the duchess, princess, and suite to the Y. M. C. A. They came to the theatre as our guests, stayed a long time after watching the games, and had a good time generally, it seemed to us.

The duchess, who is the sister of King Albert of Belgium, is a charming woman if ever there was one. She is most cordial, simple in tastes, and very much interested in Americans. The other day she talked to some leave men whom she happened to meet on a walk, became interested in them, and invited them to her hotel to dinner. They said they had a fine time until they discovered they were dining with the sister of King Albert, and then they did not know how to act.

I had a fine time at dinner with the — . Mme. — had just returned from her home in B— with some of the family treasures, and I insisted on seeing all the old miniatures. There were some of them painted on copper from the time of François premier (1500), several princesses, many marquis and marquises. I was particularly impressed with the profiles of a beautiful young marquise and her three

daughters called "The Three Graces." — could not believe that they lived two centuries ago.

Friday evening I had an appointment with the — family in their beautiful garden on the hillside. — had scheduled some nightingale songs for that time, and sure enough, the garden and woods resounded with most beautiful songs almost uninterruptedly.

I am too much a lover of our own birds to say that the nightingale surpasses them in sweetness, but the variety of its song is astonishing,—now the trill of a canary, only fuller-throated, now a warble, and again a long-drawn note that could now it seemed to me, come from the same bird. And it is so indefatigable! Song after song pours forth from the happy male, while his mate, charmed by his music, hatches the eggs in her nest. Once the eggs are hatched, no more music,—mother love will do what his song did before,—and Mr. Nightingale goes quietly about the business of living. It is for this reason that M. Masenet used to come to Aix almost every May and spend his evenings in the same garden drinking in the divine notes. For the same reason, complaints have frequently come to — from *nouveaux riches* summer visitors in the hotel next door, that his "pesky little nightingales kept them awake all night long. Could not he do something about it?"

My introduction, then, to the nightingales of my early fairy-tale days, was most satisfactory. I was not even disappointed when I saw what I thought was a small dried autumn leaf and was told it was Mr. Nightingale himself. My only disappointment was that I had always thought of nightingales as feminine and shall have therefore to rearrange my reminiscences of childhood.

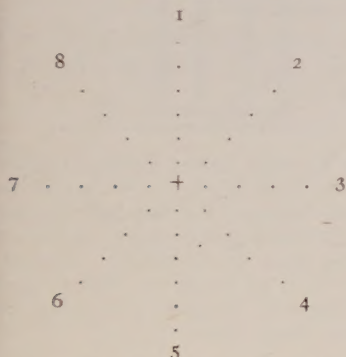
Last January I had foreseen the possibilities of Aix in the summer, but it was so beautiful at each moment, that I really had not supposed it could be so much better. But it is most gorgeous now with the trees all in leaf, horse-chestnuts in bloom, with flowers on every hand and trees covered with blossoms that resemble very much our most beautiful garden flowers. Summer has burst upon them quite suddenly, and many of the mountains that two weeks ago were covered with snow are now responding gorgeously to the magic touch of spring. The green advances each day toward the summit, only the very top still retaining the quiet brown of winter.

THE AMUSEMENT COLUMN.

[Address everything relating to the Amusement Column to Mr. Henry A. Banks, 45 Spring Lane, Canton, Mass. Contributors are requested to write on one side of the paper only. Write name and address plainly (not necessarily for publication) and send the answers to the puzzles on a separate slip of paper.]

I.

A WHEEL.



The central letter of this wheel is the first letter of each of the eight words composing it:—

1. The dog-faced ape.
2. A perennial herbaceous plant, also its fruit.
3. One that bears or carries.
4. To wrangle.
5. A narrow-necked vessel for holding liquids.
6. A restaurant.
7. Pertaining to winter.
8. Something gone by.

II.

HEROES AND HEROINES.

In what books do the following appear?

1. Æneas.
2. Lucy Ashton.
3. John Broxmouth.
4. Talbot Champneys.
5. Mary Melrose.
6. Father Howleglass.

III.

DOUBLE CROSS-WORD ENIGMA.

In mandible, but not in perjure.
In papacy, but not in pope.
In candy, but not in sugar.
In barrack, but not in dim.
In church, but not in tent.

In love, but not in peace.

In affect, but not in chilly.

In yet, but not in zebec.

My whole spells the names of two writers born in October.

IV.

NUMERICAL PUZZLE.

19, 1, 13, 21, 5, 12—23—13, 3, 3, 1, 12, 12.
A Governor of Massachusetts.

10, 15, 8, 14—17, 21, 9, 14, 3, 25—1, 4, 1, 13,
19. A President of the United States.

3, 8, 1, 18, 12, 5, 19—23—5, 12, 9, 15, 20.
A President of Harvard.

7, 5, 15, 18, 7, 5—2, 1, 14, 3, 18, 15, 6, 20.
An American writer.

19, 9, 18—5, 4, 13, 21, 14, 4—I, 14, 4, 18, 15,
19. A Colonial Governor of New England.

V.

INITIAL LETTER PUZZLE.

In the eleven sentences below appear as many words (one word in each sentence) which if found and written one below the other, the initials will spell the name of an October holiday:—

1. The camp was near the lake.
2. The boys broke the oar last night.
3. They came home by the long way.
4. The use of the boat is for the camp only.
5. The move was for the best.
6. The boat was lost at sea.
7. The urn was full of beautiful flowers.
8. The sun has not been seen for several days.
9. The day was perfect.
10. Where are all the girls and boys of the camp?
11. The year had several interesting events to remember it by.

Answers to puzzles in the September number.

I. GLOUCESTER RIDDLE: C O D.

II. FILL-IN WORDS: 1. Ear—heart. 2. And—candy. 3. Ace—maced. 4. Utter—gutters. 5. Crew—screws.

III. CROSS-WORD ENIGMA: Rasputin.

IV. PI:

"By the rude bridge that arched the flood,
Their flag to April's breeze unfurled,
Here once the embattled farmers stood,
And fired the shot heard round the world."

V. FAMOUS MEN: 1. Horatio Nelson.
2. William Cullen Bryant. 3. Phillips Brooks. 4. Charles Sumner. 5. Alfred Tennyson.

THE CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE.

OBJECTS.

1. To cheer and comfort the lonely and discouraged—not only invalids, but all who need cheer and comfort—by the interchange of letters and by gifts of books and periodicals.

2. To supply in some measure to young people in remote places the lack of schools, by gifts of school-books, letters, and, for those who desire it, correspondence classes on history, the natural sciences, and other interesting branches of study. If any desire to join such classes, they may send their names to our secretary.

3. Also to supply, to some extent, the lack of a church. One good sermon or sermon extract is printed in each number of the paper. These sermons are never doctrinal, but practical, and intended to cheer and comfort the sorrowful and aid in giving a vital religion without regard to sect or creed.

Any minister (of any sect) who receives this paper is cordially invited to distribute the copies of the *Cheerful Letter* received among lonely members of his parish, shut-ins or invalids of whom he may know. He is also invited to write to our headquarters (see address on this page) and give names and addresses of those who may be cheered and helped by becoming our correspondents.

No *theology* is disseminated in our paper. All the religious matter is intended merely to strengthen, cheer, and comfort those in need of such practical help.

Givers of books are reminded that only books of instructive or wholesome nature should be offered in the Book Club. Classics, educational works, and standard novels are always acceptable.

The address of Mrs. Emma M. Backus is now 633 Third Street, North, St. Petersburg, Florida.

LIBRARY NOTICE.

The Cheerful Letter Exchange offers to start a circulating library in any small community needing one, providing proper location and care can be furnished and satisfactory references supplied.

Apply to Miss Helen L. Wells, 269 Franklin Street, Newton, Mass.

IMPORTANT NOTICES.

The regular monthly meeting of the Cheerful Letter Exchange will be held on Friday, October 4, at 10.30 A.M., at 25 Beacon Street, Boston. All interested are cordially invited to be present.

The work has grown so it is no longer easy for the Book Club Secretary to care for all that pertains to the Club. The following lady has volunteered to take charge of the music:—

FOR REQUESTS OR OFFERS, APPLY TO MR. THOMAS LACEY, 35 EAST 30TH STREET, NEW YORK, N.Y.

The Cheerful Letter Exchange offers, in its *Home Study Work*, to send lessons to any one who wishes. We can help teachers at home for higher grades, or others who cannot continue their school studies. Lessons will be given in all subjects. Please apply to Mrs. Elmer E. Hudson, 5 Alveston Street, Jamaica Plain, Mass.

THE ATTENTION OF ALL READERS OF "THE CHEERFUL LETTER" IS CALLED TO THE FOLLOWING NOTICE:—

It is a rule of the Cheerful Letter Exchange that no one may ask for money, clothing, or other articles, except books and magazines.

The name of any person who fails to observe this rule will be dropped from our list. Any worker receiving such a request should send the letter at once to headquarters.

In sending subscriptions for the *Cheerful Letter*, address The Cheerful Letter Exchange, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass. Subscriptions, 50 cents a year.

Chairman of the Cheerful Letter Exchange, Mrs. Hubert Pope, 39 Kennebec Street, West Roxbury, Mass.

Editor of "The Cheerful Letter," Miss Freeman Clarke.

Book Club Secretary, Mrs. W. B. Nicholson, 25 Fairmount Way, Quincy, Mass.